



State Library of Massachusetts - Special Collections Department

Ms. Coll. 6

Special Commission for Investigation and Study of Improving and Extending Educational Facilities in the Commonwealth Records, 1962-1965: Guide

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator: Massachusetts. Special Commission Established to Make an Investigation and Study Relative to Improving and Extending Educational Facilities in the Commonwealth.

Call Number: Ms. Coll. 6

Extent: 5 boxes (5 linear feet)

Preferred Citation Style: *Folder Title, Box Number #.* Special Commission for Improving Educational Facilities Records. State Library of Massachusetts Special Collections.

About This Finding Aid: Description based on DACS.

Processed by: Finding aid prepared by Marc Widershien, February 5, 1985. Updated by Abigail Cramer, March, 2012.

Abstract: This collection documents the work of the Special Commission to investigate and study the possibility of improving and expanding educational facilities in Massachusetts.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection consists of minutes, correspondence, consultants' reports, staff working papers, summaries of staff activities, special reports, numerous papers and memorabilia from various education conferences, press releases, and photographs. There are also early drafts of the Willis-Harrington Report that will give the reader a sense of the behind-the-scenes coordination of activities necessary in putting together a large report to the General Court. The collection also contains mailing lists, work schedules, invoices and other financial materials that reflect the day-to-day operation of the project. There are also folders containing miscellaneous relevant, unofficial material.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Special Commission was appointed by then-Governor John A. Volpe. Under the chairmanship of Senator Kevin B. Harrington, the Commission was composed of representatives of the General Court, officials of public institutions, and members of the public-at-large. Benjamin C. Willis, then General Superintendent of Schools in Chicago, became the Commission's Executive Director of the study, and a full-time professional staff was selected under the leadership of John L. Steele. Steele, the coordinator of the Massachusetts Education Study (later called the Willis-Harrington Report), drew upon the expertise of many consultants, educators and community leaders who contributed both ideas and reports concerning the educational system in the Commonwealth and other states.

The study probed issues such as public education, special education, pupil personnel services, school facilities and transportation, and curriculum and instruction, as well as finances, laws, administration, organization, and programs and standards in Massachusetts. In the final report, the Commission recommended a Master Plan for public education in the Commonwealth. This plan was the result of increasing enrollments, and the need for larger schools, more teachers, and more finances. In June, 1965, the Commission issued its final report which contained in-depth recommendations and possible solutions to the problems of public education in Massachusetts.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in its original order.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research during the Special Collections Department's regular hours.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Copyright restrictions may apply. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with Special Collections staff.

Languages and Scripts

The collection is entirely in English.

Container List

Box #	Folder Title
1	Minutes
1	Correspondence
1	Notices of Meetings
1	Consultant's Papers and Reports
1	Summaries of Staff Activities
2-3	Financial
2-3	Mailing Lists
2-3	Work Schedules
2-3	General
4	Conferences
4	Special Reports
4	Publicity
4	Press Releases
4	Miscellany
5	Final Report Drafts